

call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding the league's efforts on behalf of Springfield and in wishing the CSLL the best of luck in the many years to come.

TRIBUTE TO SANDRÉ R. SWANSON

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has set the bar for public service, working for over thirty years for the Congress of the United States, Sandré Swanson. On March 1, 2004, Sandré retired from congressional service. The 9th Congressional District salutes and thanks him for his three decades of tireless and spirited service.

Sandr  R. Swanson met Congressman Ronald V. Dellums, my predecessor, over thirty-three years ago. Ron, at that time, was a candidate for Congress, and Sandr  was the Student Body President at Laney College in Oakland, California. Their first meeting was at an Oakland peace march protesting the May 4, 1970 shooting of four Kent State University students. This shooting ignited a national student strike that was unprecedented in the history of our country. Ron and other Civil Rights leaders were leading the march while Sandr  was leading the Laney Student Body protest. Sandr , who was not acquainted with Ron at the time, was part of a group carrying a mock casket for the fallen students. He was so impressed by Ron's speech that day that he organized scores of students for the Dellums campaign.

In 1971, Sandr  was elected, via neighborhood balloting, as the East Oakland representative for the Oakland Anti-Poverty Board. He became one of the Board's most vocal Vice-Chairmen.

In 1972, Wilson Riles Jr., who was the Northern California Coordinator for the historic presidential campaign for Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, recruited Sandr  to run the campaign's Advance Team. That was when I first met Sandr . I also recommended to Congressman Dellums that he hire Sandr  as part of his congressional staff.

On May 1, 1973, when Sandr  was 24, Congressman Dellums asked Sandr  to join the district office staff. During his tenure for the Dellums office, Sandr  served as Aide, Staff Assistant, Press Secretary, and District Director.

In the fall of 1976, judge Lionel Wilson, another significant mentor, asked Congressman Dellums to borrow Sandr  to manage his campaign for mayor. With the assistance of Sandr  as his Campaign Manager, Judge Wilson became Oakland's first African-American Mayor on May 17, 1977.

On October 25, 1977, Mayor Wilson appointed Sandr  to the Oakland Civil Service Commission, where he served with distinction as Chairman and Commissioner for two terms. The Commission's employee and union appeals caseload doubled under Chairman Swanson's leadership.

In 1990, Congressman Dellums invited Nelson Mandela to Oakland, California following his release from a South African prison after twenty-seven years. A coalition of labor, community and church groups asked Congress-

man Dellums to grant Sandr  leave so that he could serve as the Northern California Coordinator for the Nelson Mandela Freedom Tour. Working with the legendary Bill Graham and hundreds of community organizations, Sandr  brought 60,000 people to the Oakland Coliseum in support of this celebration. To complete this historic event, he organized a fundraising dinner in Oakland for 3,000 people. The committee gave the Free South Africa movement the largest contribution of the tour.

In 1993, as a result of military base closures, Congressman Dellums asked Sandr  to spearhead the congressional district's military base conversion effort. Sandr  was the architect of the cross jurisdictional memberships on local reuse authorities in charge of military base conversion in Alameda County. He served as Vice-Chair of the Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Authority and Commissioner on the Oakland Base Authority for five years.

In 1998, when I took office, I hired Sandr  as my District Director. On May 1, 1999, twenty-six years after I recommended that Congressman Dellums hire him, I appointed Sandr  as my own Chief of Staff. As my most trusted advisor, he managed my Washington and Oakland offices.

Sandr  has served on countless boards and commissions. He has been the Chair and is currently a trustee for the Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association (ACERA). ACERA manages benefits for its retirees and makes the investment decisions for a 3.5 billion dollar pension fund. Sandr  is also the Vice-Chair of the Alameda Golf Commission.

After such distinguished and prestigious service to his community, Sandr  retired from congressional service on March 1, 2004. I wish him continued success long into the future, and I also thank him for his outstanding contributions to this congressional district. I take great pride in joining Sandr 's wife, Anita, and his children, friends and colleagues to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of Sandr  R. Swanson.

ORGAN DONATION AND RECOVERY IMPROVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 2004

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3926, the Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act. I recently introduced this legislation, which reflects a bipartisan, bicameral agreement that was reached with the Senate late last year. I am urging all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this timely legislation.

Most of us are well aware of the great need for donated organs and tissue. According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, there are 84,138 people currently waiting for a transplant. Only 23,387 individuals had received a transplant between January and November of 2003. Additionally, 12,133 individuals had donated their organs within that same timeframe. Tragically, 6,187 individuals died in 2002 while on the waiting list.

It is our duty to do everything in our power to prevent these oftentimes needless deaths

from occurring. That's why H.R. 3926 is so important. This legislation targets federal dollars into areas that we feel will have a substantial impact in increasing organ donation rates in this country. For example, living donors represented over half of all donors in the first nine months of 2003. That is why H.R. 3926 authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants for the purpose of covering travel and subsistence expenses incurred by living organ donors. While the decision to become a living organ donor is an intensely personal one, I feel that it is our responsibility to remove any financial barriers that might prevent someone from making the "gift of life."

H.R. 3926 also provides the Secretary with \$15 million in new grant authority to assist state governments and public and nonprofit private entities in developing innovative initiatives designed to increase organ donation rates, including living donation. I am hopeful we will learn some valuable lessons from these demonstration projects that we will be able to apply on a national scale.

I also want to point out for my colleagues that this bill contains important evaluation mechanisms, so we can ensure that our targeted federal assistance makes a demonstrable impact on increasing organ and tissue donation rates. I think these provisions are critically important and will help us monitor the effectiveness of these new programs.

I would like to take a moment to note that section 4 of this legislation is modeled after the Floyd D. Spence Organ Coordination Improvement Act, which Congressman JOE WILSON introduced in the 107th Congress. I know he's worked very hard with Congressman JAY INSLEE in this area, and I'm pleased we were able to include this important provision in our broader bill.

H.R. 3926 is widely supported by the transplant community and takes a positive step forward in our effort to ensure that every American has access to a donated organ or tissue when they need it.

TRIBUTE TO MR. HARRY THOMAS

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say that one person can make a difference. One person in Seattle who made a big difference is—Mr. Harry Thomas—an unsung hero who has bettered the lives of thousands of people by advocating for safe and affordable housing.

Mr. Thomas is about to retire from the Seattle Housing Authority, and his career of distinguished public service is worthy of special note by the Congress.

Mr. Thomas served as executive director of the Seattle Housing Authority for 14 of the last 17 years. Under Thomas' leadership, the Authority won \$136 million in federal grants which leveraged a total investment of \$750 million to transform three World-War II era public housing developments—New Holly, Rainier Vista, and High Point—into vibrant new mixed-income communities.

Prior to his work with the Seattle Housing Authority, Harry served as Deputy County Executive for King County, and as the Executive